

HB 2212-S.E - DIGEST

(AS OF HOUSE 2ND READING 3/13/2007)

Finds that the goal of preserving Washington's agricultural lands is shared by citizens throughout the state.

Recognizes that efforts to achieve a balance between the productive use of these resource lands and associated regulatory requirements have proven difficult, but that good faith efforts to seek solutions have yielded successes. The legislature believes that this willingness to find and pursue common ground will enable Washingtonians to enjoy the benefits of a successful agricultural economy and a healthy environment, while also preventing the unnecessary conversion of valuable agricultural lands. The legislature, therefore, intends this act, the temporary delays it establishes for amending or adopting provisions of certain critical area ordinances and implementing regulations, and the duties and requirements it prescribes for the William D. Ruckelshaus Center, to be expressions of progress in resolving, harmonizing, and advancing commonly held environmental protection and agricultural viability goals.

Expects the duties and requirements it is prescribing for the Ruckelshaus Center to be successful. If, however, the efforts of the center do not result in a consensus of how to best address the conflicts between agricultural activities and certain regulatory requirements as they apply to agricultural activities, the legislature intends, upon the expiration of the delay, to require jurisdictions that have delayed amending or adopting certain regulatory measures to promptly complete all regulatory amendments or adoptions necessary to comply with the growth management act.

Does not intend this act to reduce or otherwise diminish existing critical area ordinances and implementing regulations that protect critical areas that apply to agricultural activities during the deferral period established in this act.

Provides that, until July 1, 2009, counties and cities must defer amending or adopting critical area ordinances and implementing regulations under RCW 36.70A.060(2) as they specifically apply to agricultural activities.

Provides that counties and cities that defer amending or adopting critical area ordinances and implementing regulations under this act must review and revise these ordinances and regulations as they specifically apply to agricultural activities to comply with the requirements of this chapter by July 1, 2010.

Provides that, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the William D. Ruckelshaus Center must conduct an examination of the conflicts between agricultural activities and critical area

ordinances and implementing regulations adopted under chapter 36.70A RCW to protect critical areas. The examination required by this provision must commence by July 1, 2007.

Requires the center to issue a final report of findings and legislative recommendations to the governor and the appropriate committees of the house of representatives and the senate by September 1, 2008.

Provides that the act shall be null and void if appropriations are not approved.